

## College of Communication debuts with new programs, facilities

### The time is right for the launch of DePaul's new College of Communication.

"We're almost grateful we didn't get this college under way before this year because if we had, it may have been based on an already-outdated model," said Jacqueline Taylor, dean of DePaul's ninth and newest college. "The communication environment is changing very rapidly."

The new college is aggressively embracing the digital technologies changing the face and pace of communication with a multimedia lab/newsroom on the concourse level of the DePaul Center. The recently opened Communication and Digital Cinema Center (CDCC) includes a PC lab, a Mac lab, a broadcast facility with a state-of-the-art green screen studio and two "smart" classrooms.

The center will be maintained and operated by the newly formed Center for Cinema and Interactive Arts in DePaul's School of Computer Science, Telecommunications and Information Systems (CTI), according to Matt Irvine, assistant professor in CTI and director of the CDCC. The facilities and equipment also will be shared with CTI's Digital Cinema program, the most comprehensive media production program of its kind.

Classes for the College of Communication's two new master's degree programs will be taught in the CDCC. The M.A. in media, culture and society is an interdisciplinary program combining theoretical study, historical perspective and practical application

for understanding the cultural and societal implications of the new digital media landscape. The M.A. in journalism prepares students to tell stories on multiple platforms—print, broadcast, audio, video and Internet. A master's in public relations and advertising and a master's in organizational and multicultural communication were already on the books.

Some specialized undergraduate classes will be taught in the CDCC, although most undergraduate classes will continue to be taught in Lincoln Park, Taylor said.

**"These new labs allow us to be responsive to the new technologies in the field of communication that our students will need to work with," Taylor said. "For example, they are the ideal environment to teach journalism, which has seen a convergence of story-telling platforms." The fundamentals of newsgathering, however, will remain paramount.**

The journalism graduate degree will emphasize ethical, socially responsible behavior. This becomes even more critical in a 24/7 news environment where journalists are under pressure to get information first, sometimes at the expense of accuracy, Taylor said.

The College of Communication, formerly the department of communication in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, begins with about 950 undergrads and nearly 120 graduate students. Applications for the media, culture and society and the journalism master's programs exceeded enrollment goals. "We attracted a talented and diverse pool of candidates who formed classes that reflect the diversity of the workplace they will soon enter," Taylor said.

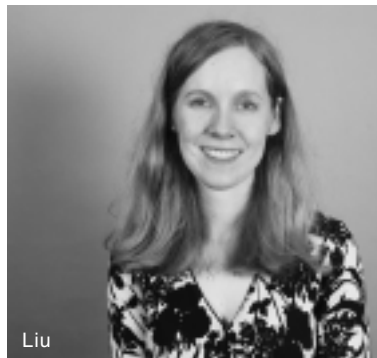


Jacqueline Taylor, dean of DePaul's ninth and newest college, in the recently opened Communication and Digital Cinema Center (CDCC) at the Loop Campus, which will include a PC lab, a Mac lab, a broadcast facility with a state-of-the-art green screen studio and two "smart" classrooms.

## Government PR: a different take on public relations

**Most people think of public relations as a corporate activity, but Assistant Professor Brooke Fisher Liu offers a broader view.**

This scholar and teacher is interested in what the government does, or doesn't do, about PR—as the title of her newly published book, “Playing Politics: Why the U.S. Government Inadequately Communicates Spanish-language Disaster Information,” indicates.



Liu, who worked as a press secretary for a state representative in Missouri during graduate school, studies how the public relations activities of government entities impact the people they serve—with the interest of improving on those efforts. She and her colleague, J. Suzanne Horsley of the University of Utah, developed a model for government PR, and, with a recent \$10,000 grant awarded by the Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations, will test it with a study that compares the PR practices of the corporate and government sectors.

Liu says her research already has revealed that government PR practitioners have a very difficult job, not only because of limited budgets, but because of the scope of their target audiences. “Proctor and Gamble has a pretty defined target,” she points out. **“But your PR person for the county, for example, has to deal with languages, minorities, huge demographic groups. You’re communicating to everyone.** Therefore, minorities are going to get left out.”

Her study will answer questions such as what kind of pressure organizations operate under and what tactics they use, whether it's blogging or more traditional methods such as press releases or special events. Liu is interested in online communication and helps monitor the blogosphere for the Red Cross during disaster relief activities, such as the recent wildfires in California.

The results of the Plank Center study will benefit students and current practitioners. “Most academics do research on the corporate side. Government folks are very interested in the research because they don't have any money to do their own,” Liu says.

*“The information will help students going into the field understand what the differences are and what skill sets they might need. It will help them understand the landscape of the field.”*

Liu is teaching an undergraduate course in crisis communication and a graduate course in government communication in the winter quarter.

*continued from front page*

### Communication debut

The college has 32 full-time and 45 adjunct faculty. Professors Bruno Teboul and Jill O'Brien have been named associate deans. Teboul will work closely with faculty on core administrative functions, while O'Brien will develop new continuing and professional education offerings. An office suite to house the college's administrative team was recently completed in the Schmitt Academic Center.

Boding well for the new college, Taylor said, is “our location in the heart of a great city and one of the world's leading media and business centers. The college embodies all the communication disciplines—from communication studies to mass communication. That will provide for some great synergies to craft new majors and programs. We're unique in Chicago with regard to the breadth of what we offer in a single college at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.”

There will be a dynamic mix of classes that are theoretically and critically grounded, along with a variety of applied courses taught in labs and classrooms outfitted with the latest in multimedia technology. Best of all, according to Taylor, is the caliber of the faculty. “These are talented teachers committed to our students' success who also produce award-winning scholarship. Our faculty exemplify the teacher/scholar model.”



## Welcome to the College of Communication

**What a thrill to write this letter as the founding dean of the new College of Communication. The moment was ripe for the creation of this college and already the new structure has begun to yield exciting results. What made this moment so special?**

- n **It was the right time with the right people.** The study of human and mass communication always has been fascinating, always has been a study of something that constantly touches and shapes our lives. But now in the digital age, as paradigms for communication at work and in the home are in rapid flux, the study of communication is ever more critical and central to understanding and participating effectively in our modern world. This moment of change—when journalism, for instance, experiences precipitous drops in the audience for print news, while people have access to a radically altered 24/7 news cycle—is the perfect time to rethink curricula and create new programs that speak to the current moment. Our faculty have done so in remarkable ways in the months since the college was established, creating new M.A. programs, revising the undergraduate curriculum, and generating multiple new initiatives.
- n **It was the right place.** Located in the heart of the great city of Chicago, a major media market with a vast network of communication professionals, DePaul's College of Communication is poised to collaborate as never before with leaders in the Chicago community to build opportunities and support cutting-edge programs for our students. The college has a strong internship program, which places approximately 125 students per year throughout our network of nearly 900 potential sites. Current conversations with communication professionals focus on how we can continue to expand these opportunities for our students and create new occasions for them to learn from the best and the brightest in communication fields.

DePaul prides itself on its diversity. One of the places that commitment is realized is in our college. Our undergraduate major is distinguished by the inclusion of intercultural communication as one of only three core courses. Regardless of specific area of study, every communication major needs a deep understanding of how cultural differences shape communication (and miscommunication) in preparation for an increasingly diverse workplace and world. Similarly, our M.A. in organizational and multicultural communication, a unique degree nationally, blends the study of diversity and culture with the study of how people communicate in organizations, to prepare our students for the kind of workplace they will enter.

The College of Communication houses a set of practical, can-do disciplines at DePaul, Chicago's practical, can-do university. Yes, of course, we teach history, theory and criticism. Of course, we teach our students to think critically, to understand the why. But we also teach them how—including how to write, speak and communicate more effectively.

Education in our college does not occur in silos. Undergraduate students can move across our broad array of courses in communication studies, journalism, cinema and media studies and public relations and advertising, or they can specialize in one area. Graduate students select from four strong and distinctive M.A. programs. And all of our students have access to the strong technology and production programs available through digital cinema.

**For all of these reasons and more, I cannot imagine a more perfect confluence of time, place, first-class faculty, engaged students and institutional and community support. The College of Communication is off and running.**

**Ranking high for service learning:** DePaul University's efforts in community-based service learning, a hallmark of the university's Vincentian mission, were recognized by U.S. News & World Report. DePaul was one of 23 top service-learning programs in the nation cited by the publication in its "Programs to Look For" section of its "America's Best Colleges 2008" edition. This is the fifth consecutive year that the magazine ranked DePaul's service learning program among the nation's top 25. DePaul is the only university in Illinois honored in the service learning category.

**... and for diversity:** DePaul's campus diversity was lauded by two different national publications. In The Princeton Review's annual college guide, "The Best 366 Colleges," DePaul was ranked No. 20 in the country in the "Diverse Student Body" category. This is the fifth consecutive year that DePaul has been ranked in the nation's top 20 in diversity by The Princeton Review. The Princeton Review rankings are based on surveys of 120,000 students at 366 top colleges, who rate their schools in dozens of categories and report on their campus experiences. DePaul also received other honors for diversity recently. In July, the university once again was prominent in the 2007 Diverse Issues in Higher Education rankings of the 100 top

minority degree-producing institutions. DePaul was ranked in 25 different categories, scoring among the nation's top 25 in seven of them.

**Working it:** Several departments will be hosting DePaul Career Week, an exciting week of programs and activities designed specifically for DePaul's adult students and alumni, from Feb. 19 to 24. The week will feature various activities including workshops, networking opportunities and guest speakers. DePaul Career Week is a collaborative response to a growing need for increased services among experienced adults, those in transition and those looking for change. For more information, contact Vicki Klopsch, assistant director of Alumni Sharing Knowledge, at 312.362.8282, e-mail her at [vklopsch@depaul.edu](mailto:vklopsch@depaul.edu), or visit [careercenter.depaul.edu/careerweek](http://careercenter.depaul.edu/careerweek).

**Sharing your news:** In future issues of Conversations, we will feature profiles of alumni with interesting jobs in communication. If you would like to be considered for an upcoming profile, please e-mail Editor Ruhan Memishi at [rmemishi@depaul.edu](mailto:rmemishi@depaul.edu) with information about your occupation.

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**College of Communication Web site**

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The **Conversations** editorial board consists of Dean Jacqueline Taylor; Vukoni Lupa-Lasaga of Advancement; and Ruhan Memishi and Carol Sadtler of University Relations. Copy editor is Maria Hench.

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